

## ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A fuel cell system that includes fuel processing components, such as a reformer and shift converter, for  
5 converting an organic fuel to hydrogen, is shut-down by  
disconnecting the fuel cell from its load and purging the  
fuel processing components of residual hydrogen with a  
flow of air. The purge air may be forced through the  
components in series or in parallel, using a blower; or,  
10 the purge air may be allowed to enter the components  
through a low inlet, whereupon the air rises through the  
components by natural circulation and exits through a  
high outlet, along with the residual hydrogen.

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